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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTE](#) [SNAR](#) [MX](#)
SUBJECT: SECRETARY CHERTOFF'S MEETINGS WITH ATTORNEY
GENERAL EDUARDO MEDINA MORA AND PUBLIC SECURITY SECRETARY
GENARO GARCIA LUNA

THIS CABLE IS SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED; PLEASE HANDLE
ACCORDINGLY.

Summary

11. (SBU) During a two-day trip to Mexico City, Secretary of
Homeland Security Michael Chertoff met February 16 with
Mexican Secretary of Public Security Genaro Garcia Luna.
Secretary Chertoff and senior Department of Homeland Security

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(DHS) staff heard Medina Mora outline plans to improve
investigation and prosecution of crime in Mexico, discussed
increasing cooperation in attacking the trade in
methamphetamine precursor chemicals, reviewed Mexico's
strategy for controlling its southern border, and agreed to
further operational engagement in each of these areas. End
Summary.

Policing/Prosecutorial Changes Outlined

12. (SBU) Medina Mora opened by outlining the legal changes
the Calderon administration would seek from the Mexican
Congress to improve the link between policing,
investigations, and prosecution. First, he said, President
Calderon would seek a constitutional amendment to give a
reorganized federal police force the power to conduct
criminal investigations. Every federal police officer should
have the capacity to conduct investigations without prior
approval from the Office of the Attorney General (PGR), as is
now required. His office would still need to validate the
results of such investigations, but he expected his officers
in the future to focus on building legal cases rather than
"chasing bad guys." Chasing bad guys is a police function,
he said.

13. (SBU) Second, he said, he expected Mexico to move toward
a mixed system of oral trials and the current accusatorial
system of justice. Without outlining a time frame or
legislative strategy to effect the change, Medina Mora said
the PGR would seek to institute oral trials at the federal
level for "minor" crimes, retaining accusatorial procedures
for major criminal cases, particularly against the cartels.

However, under the reforms outlined above, his office would have a strengthened capability to develop and present evidence to judges for processing major criminal cases.
Embassy comment: There is something inconsistent across these plans on justice reform. But then the legal package is still being developed. End comment.

14. (SBU) Finally, Medina Mora noted that he wanted to bring all of Mexico under single criminal and procedural codes at the federal and state levels.

OASSIS

15. (SBU) Secretary Chertoff led his comments by noting the success of the Smugglers and Traffickers Initiative on Safety and Security (OASSIS) program and offered to work with the GOM to expand it. Medina Mora agreed, called the program valuable, and endorsed its extension, particularly to the area between Eastern California/Baja California and Sonora/Arizona where he estimated 80 percent of the migrant traffic crossed into the United States. Secretary Chertoff reminded Medina Mora that he would be traveling to Arizona the following week, noting he needed to remain visibly active in promoting tighter controls against the flow of illegal immigrants even as his administration worked for a temporary worker program.

Meth Precursors

16. (SBU) Medina Mora turned to Mexico's growing problem with methamphetamine production and trafficking and told

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Secretary Chertoff that the GOM had recently seized close to

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40 metric tons of pseudoephedrine shipped from Hong Kong through Long Beach to Manzanillo. He noted that as much as 97 percent of illicit precursor chemicals were routed in this fashion, and asked for better U.S. monitoring and interdiction at the port of Long Beach, as well as U.S. - GOM diplomatic engagement in Asia, to target and impede such illegal shipments. Secretary Chertoff asked Medina Mora to share more details of the seizure with DHS. If such large volumes are passing through Long Beach, then improved targeting, informed by Mexican Law Enforcement intelligence, could improve U.S. targeting of precursor shipments bound for Mexico. The U.S. and Mexico need to cooperate more closely in this area, Secretary Chertoff agreed. He offered to "put someone operational" to work in this area to see how both countries could share intelligence and jointly analyze vulnerabilities.

Southern Focus

17. (SBU) Broadening the discussion, Medina Mora outlined what he called the three most critical law enforcement challenges Mexico faces: improving the institutional strength of local, state, and federal police forces; dismantling the sophisticated business operations run by the drug cartels; and crafting a regional strategy encompassing the U.S., Mexico and Central America. The cocaine trade through Central America gives Mexican cartels the money, incentives, capabilities, and corrosive impact they have in Mexico and its southern neighbors, he said.

18. (SBU) Secretary Chertoff asked Medina Mora to outline Mexico's southern border strategy. Medina Mora suggested that interdiction capacity-building among Central American countries as a necessary key focus. The problem for Mexico,

he said, is truly regional, and potential instability in Central America would pose direct and immediate threats to public security in Mexico. He cited Guatemala as particularly problematic. Understandable reductions in the armed forces there in recent years have created a security vacuum, particularly in the Peten, the northernmost department of Guatemala, which Medina Mora called a no-man's land.

¶9. (SBU) The Attorney General suggested shifting U.S. Halcon Citations to Guatemala, since, he averred, airborne shipments of illegal drugs within Mexico toward the north were rare. Similarly, Mora staffer Oscar Rocha outlined a proposal whereby the U.S. would purchase go-fasts seized and re-furbished by Mexico and provide them to Central American governments for their own interdiction efforts.. Providing them a shore-based interdiction capability they currently lack would compliment U.S. blue water patrols in the region and get buy-in from the Centrals for a regional counter-drug effort. Without providing encouragement to these specific proposals, Secretary Chertoff agreed the situation warranted creative approaches and promised to work the inter-agency community in Washington to see what kinds of resources various elements, such as DOD, might be able to put into the mix.

Cuba

¶10. (SBU) Medina Mora warned of the destabilizing dangers of a rapid post-Castro regime collapse in Cuba and argued that a "semi-authoritarian" regime evolving toward democracy would be better for stability in the region. He said displaced Cuban regime elements, particularly from the armed forces, could pose an organized crime threat in the Hemisphere akin to the Russian mafia in Europe.

¶11. (SBU) The meeting concluded with the Attorney General saying he sought a "U.S.- Canadian-style" relationship, a true partnership rather than a "made-in-USA" program such as what he argued characterized much of Plan Colombia. If we are to truly improve the quality of our cooperation, he

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stated, Mexico needs to build its own capabilities, as well as help its Central American neighbors. Secretary Chertoff responded by saying he understood Mexico's political dynamic and urged again that the GOM give the U.S. its own plan, particularly concerning the southern border. He said he would work it through our inter-agency, map it, and build a support strategy.

Garcia Luna

¶12. (SBU) Secretary Chertoff next met with Public Security Secretary Genaro Garcia Luna, who thanked Secretary Chertoff

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for the cooperation DHS had extended to him, both at the Public Security Secretariat (SSP) and at the Mexican Federal Investigations Agency (AFI), which he ran during the Fox administration. He briefly discussed some of the same legal reforms Medina Mora had discussed and outlined the Mexican President Felipe Calderon's plans to merge a number of Mexican Law Enforcement agencies under his authority at SSP, and noted that he would be recruiting over 8,000 new officers in the coming year. This, he said, would require a new approach to vetting officers, and he expressed the hope that DHS could help him establish programs for assuring the integrity of his force.

¶13. (SBU) Garcia Luna asked for clear guidance from DHS regarding appropriate points-of-contact within each DHS

component and on particular issues of mutual interest. Both governments have complex federal law enforcement systems, and sometimes make "erroneous" connections. Secretary Chertoff noted that he would soon send a senior DHS Attache to Mexico and expressed the hope that this would improve coordination efforts.

¶14. (SBU) Garcia Luna highlighted the operational focus of his Secretariat and the need for close coordination with DHS. "You will have open access to our (law enforcement) intelligence information," he said, and added that he hoped to work closely with DHS to establish protocols to allow for more sharing of "high-quality" law enforcement intelligence.

¶15. (SBU) Secretary Chertoff emphasized the importance of Border Enforcement Security Taskforce (BEST) program as a forum for DHS cooperation with SSP, and told Garcia Luna that he had designated Immigration and Customs Enforcement Assistant Secretary Julie Myers as the principal point of contact for pursuing cooperation via that program. He also noted the importance of the Border Violence Protocols, and told Garcia Luna that his lead for that program would be Chief of the Border Patrol David Aguilar. DHS Chief Intelligence Officer Charles Allen of the Department's Office of Intelligence and Analysis has the lead on intelligence and information exchanges, Secretary Chertoff said.

¶16. (U) Secretary Chertoff did not have an opportunity to review this message before leaving Mexico.

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